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# Embassy of the United States of America

## Public Affairs Section

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February 8, 2006

## Government of the United States brings humanitarian assistance to Cobija

The U.S. Embassy facilitated today the transportation of a shipment of emergency supplies and food to the city of Cobija, in the northernmost department of Pando, a place hit by a natural disaster caused by relentless rains and floods. Thanks to the assistance of the Embassy, a C-130 aircraft flown by pilots of the Black Devils unit of the Bolivian Air Force, left El Alto for the city of Cobija in an effort to bring tents, blankets, and other supplies to the victims, in response to a request for assistance by the Bolivian government. Bolivian Minister of Defense Walker San Miguel and the Prefect (Governor) of Pando, Leopoldo Lopez, accompanied the shipment aboard the C-130.

The U.S. Embassy Military Group, in close coordination with the Vice Ministry of Civil Defense, had pre-positioned a large quantity of disaster relief supplies in El Alto, including medicines, blankets, cots, tents and clothing. Since 2004, the U.S. Embassy, through its Military Group and the U.S. Southern Command in Miami, has contributed more than half a million dollars to civil defense preparedness in Bolivia, including workshops and training exercises. This advance planning enabled the U.S. Embassy to donate rapidly these supplies to the victims in La Paz, Santa Cruz, and today in Cobija.

To date, U.S. Embassy assistance to Bolivia in response to the recent natural disasters in several regions of the country totals more than \$us 900,000. Additionally, the Embassy's Narcotics Affairs Section (NAS) authorized the Red Devils Unit to use its helicopters to rescue victims, deliver emergency relief supplies, and transport government officials and relief officials to disaster sites.

All these efforts are further evidence of the U.S. Embassy's friendship and commitment to the people of Bolivia.

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